

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An Internet charging system in a system having an information terminal and a terminal server that provides Internet access service employing a public network to the information terminal, comprising on the terminal server side:

a charging server for sequentially calculating an Internet usage fee which occurs according to Internet usage by an Internet user through the information terminal;

a charging database having a charging table required for calculating the Internet usage fee; and

a customer database having a customer table which includes information on a customer as the Internet user through the information terminal;

wherein the charging table which includes information on a charging method associated with Internet access is periodically transmitted to the information terminal;

wherein the information terminal is adapted to allow the customer to select a desired charging method information from the transmitted charging table, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network[[-]] ; and

wherein said charging server includes a calculating unit for calculating a network access charge by said charging server according to a charging method information selected by said customer, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network.

2. (Currently Amended) An Internet charging system in a system having an information terminal and a terminal server that provides Internet access service

employing a public network to the information terminal, comprising on the terminal server side:

- a charging server for sequentially calculating an Internet usage fee which occurs according to Internet usage by an Internet user through the information terminal;

- a charging database having a charging table required for calculating the Internet usage fee;

- a customer database having a customer table which includes information on a customer as the Internet user through the information terminal;

- an advertisement data controller for controlling a size and a display time of an advertisement which is sent to the terminal server;

- an advertisement content server for retaining contents of the advertisement;

- a data traffic monitor server for monitoring data traffic of the Internet; and

- a usage state monitor server for monitoring a state of Internet usage by the customer;

wherein the charging table which includes information on a charging method associated with Internet access is periodically transmitted to the information terminal; and

wherein an Internet access service providing method, an advertisement distribution method, and the charging method associated with Internet access are changed according to the state of Internet usage by the customer and the result of the selection by the customer of the desired charging method information in the charging table, said desired charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network~~[[.]]~~ ; and

wherein said charging server includes a calculating unit for calculating a network access charge by said charging server according to a charging method information selected by said customer, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement

displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network.

3. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 comprising in the information terminal;
 - an access program for accessing the Internet;
 - a usage state monitor program for monitoring the state of Internet usage by the customer;
 - an information terminal charging database having an information terminal charging table which includes information required for calculating the Internet usage fee; and
 - an access setting database having an access table which includes information on plural providers such as phone numbers, ID numbers, passwords,
 - wherein the information terminal is configured to automatically change a provider.
4. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the charging table has line usage fee information concerning a usage fee of the public network.
5. (Currently Amended) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 [[26]] wherein the charging table has advertisement size information concerning a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal.
6. (Currently Amended) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 [[26]] wherein the charging table has advertisement number information concerning the number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal.

7. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the charging table has advertisement display time information concerning a display time of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal.
8. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the charging table has usage time-zone information concerning a time zone in which the client uses the Internet.
9. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the charging table has information on accumulated access time that is an accumulation of time for which the customer uses the Internet.
10. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the charging table has data packet amount information concerning an amount of data packets utilized in the Internet.
11. (Currently Amended) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 ~~[[26]]~~ wherein the charging table has communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network.
12. (Currently Amended) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 1 ~~[[26]]~~ wherein the charging table has electronic commerce deal amount/frequency information, which concerns a deal amount when the customer performs electronic commerce employing the Internet, and a frequency of performing the electronic commerce.
13. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, comprising in the information terminal:
 - an access program for accessing the Internet;
 - a usage state monitor program for monitoring the state of Internet usage by the customer;

an information terminal charging database having an information terminal charging table which includes information required for calculating the Internet usage fee; and
an access setting database having an access table which includes information on plural providers, thereby automatically changing a provider.

14. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, wherein the charging table has line usage fee information concerning a usage fee of the public network.

15. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 23, wherein the charging table has advertisement size information concerning a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal.

16. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 23, wherein the charging system advertisement number information concerning the number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal.

17. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, wherein the charging table has advertisement display time information concerning a display time of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal.

18. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, wherein the charging table has usage time-zone information concerning a time zone in which the client uses the Internet.

19. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, wherein the charging table has information on accumulated access time that is an accumulation of time for which the customer uses the Internet.

20. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 2, wherein the charging table has data packet amount information concerning an amount of data packets utilized in the Internet.

21. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 23, wherein the charging table has communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network.

22. (Previously Presented) The Internet charging system as defined in Claim 23, wherein the charging table has electronic commerce deal amount/frequency information, which concerns a deal amount when the customer performs electronic commerce employing the Internet, and a frequency of performing the electronic commerce.

23. (Currently Amended) An Internet charging system in a system having an information terminal and a terminal server that provides Internet access service employing a public network to the information terminal, comprising on the terminal server side:

- a charging server for sequentially calculating an Internet usage fee which occurs according to Internet usage by an Internet user through the information terminal;

- a charging database having a charging table required for calculating the Internet usage fee;

- a customer database having a customer table which includes information on a customer as the Internet user through the information terminal;

- an advertisement data controller for controlling a size and a display time of an advertisement which is sent to the terminal server;

- an advertisement content server for retaining contents of the advertisement;

- a data traffic monitor server for monitoring data traffic of the Internet; and

- a usage state monitor server for monitoring a state of Internet usage by the customer;

wherein the charging table which includes information on a charging method associated with Internet access is periodically transmitted to the information terminal;

wherein one or more of an Internet access service providing method, an advertisement distribution method, and the charging method associated with Internet access are changed according to the state of Internet usage by the customer and the result of the selection by the customer of the desired charging method information in the charging table; and

wherein the information terminal is configured to automatically change a provider.

24. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a network access to a user of an information terminal in a system including a terminal server, a charging server, and a customer database, said method comprising the steps of:

responsive to receiving a network access request from said user by said terminal server, conditionally, upon successfully authenticating said user, granting said connection request;

charging said user by said charging server based upon a charging information in said customer database;

presenting a user with a selection for charging method information, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network;

calculating a network access charge by said charging server according to a charging method information selected by said user, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network;

responsive to accepting said user's selection, transmit said selection to at least one of: said customer database, said charging server.

25. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a network access to a user of an information terminal in a system including a terminal server, a charging server, a customer database, and an access setting database including information on plural providers, said method comprising the steps of:

responsive to receiving a network access request from said user by said terminal server, conditionally, upon successfully authenticating said user, granting said connection request;

charging said user by said charging server based upon a charging information in said customer database;

presenting a user with a selection for charging method information;

calculating a network access charge by said charging server according to a charging method information selected by said user, said charging method information including at least one information item selected from the group consisting of: a size of the advertisement displayed on the information terminal, a number of advertisements displayed on the information terminal, electronic commerce deal amount, electronic commerce deal frequency, and communication traffic state information concerning a communication traffic state in the public network;

responsive to accepting said user's selection, automatically select a provider from said access setting database.

26. (Cancelled Without Prejudice or Disclaimer)